

ABSTRACT

Requests are received for retrieving and storing data from and to a plurality of storage devices. A processor is designated for handling each request, based, e.g., on the load of each processor. A request for retrieving data is forwarded directly from the designated processor to the storage device via a switch. Responses from the storage devices are routed directly to the designated processor via the switch. The switch independently routes the request for retrieving data and the responses between the storage devices and the processor, based on directory information obtained by the processor. Data provided by a designated processor is stored on the storage devices via a switch. The switch independently routes the data to be stored directly from the designated processor to the storage devices, based on directory information created by the processor. Requests and responses are exchanged between the switch and the storage devices via at least one high speed network connected to the storage devices.